

IS LEFT HAND BATTER BEST? BIG LEAGUE STARS ARE DIVIDED

Two Who Argue Merits Held Opposite Views; One Claims Righthander is Handicapped by Greater Distance From First Base; Other Contends Advantage Lies With Right Handed Batter in Most Cases.

BY MONTE.

NEW YORK, Jan. 5.—Two noted big league stars met here the other day. Both are famous batters. One is a right handed clouter, the other a left hander. They became engaged in a discussion over the relative merits of hitting from one side of the plate or the other. The right hander said the left hander had "all the better of it." This the left hander disputed. It is the other way around, he said.

The argument waxed hot. There was no way to settle it, and indeed there never will be any way to settle it. The debaters finally reached such a degree of warmth in their manifestations that the highly amused bystanders felt forced to call the show off and invite all hands to have a drink.

Right vs. left handed battling has been a subject for conversation among ball players since the game began to grow, but the two sides of the question probably never have been presented more completely and intelligently than on this occasion. To begin with, each had his own firm opinion. And each backed his up with a line of logic.

The Right Hander's Case. The right hander presented his case thusly:

"A good right hander deserves much more credit than a good left hander, because he is under a natural disadvantage. In the first place, being on the left side of the plate, he has to run farther than the left hander in order to reach first base, and therefore loses a lot of hits by margins of half a step or so. That matter of distance is only a slight element, though. When the right hander whirls his bat, the swing naturally turns him around facing toward third base instead of toward first. Then he has to plant his feet and begin moving in the opposite direction. This sudden stop and reverse twist occupies only a fraction of a second and is hard to notice offhand, but it means a difference of about three yards in getting away toward the base. The left hander, however, naturally whirls around and has initial impetus in the direction of first base, pivoting as he does on his right foot just after he steps forward to swing his bat. There is no stoppage of motion for him. He just keeps on.

Argument of Left Hander.

The left hander took the floor thusly: "It is true that we fellows have an edge in the matter of getting on the move toward our destination. I grant that much. But making speed toward the base will not help a man if he can't hit the ball. It is in this most important thing of all that the right hander has the margin on his side. A left handed batter can hit a right handed pitcher harder than can a right handed batter and a right handed bat-

ter can hit a southpaw harder than can a left handed batter. That is because of the way the curves break in relation to the angle of the bat. It works the same way with the fast ball as with the curve.

Few Southpaw Pitchers. "Right vs. left" and "right vs. left" mean scant hitting; right vs. left and left vs. right mean heavy hitting. In the latter case the ball breaks parallel to the angle of the bat; in the former it breaks across the bat angle and therefore doesn't have to swerve as much in order to make a batter miss. That seems to figure 50-50 for both types of batters, but it doesn't for the reason that there are more right handed pitchers than southpaws, and therefore the right handed batters get more chance to practice against that kind of pitching. Accordingly they can learn to hit it. But it is not so with us left handers. Southpaws appear so seldom in proportion that they never cease to be a puzzle when they do pitch.

Braves Used Double Shift. Each to help in the argument offered examples to prove his point. The southpaw batter pointed to the double shifting outfield used by George Stallings on the Boston Braves. He would send in three right handed batters to the garden posts when a southpaw pitched, and three left handed swingers when a right hander was on the mound.

The right hander named Ty Cobb as a conspicuous example of a left handed batter who can get in first base in a flash and make hits out of mealy little infield rollers. That is the principal reason why he excels so far, according to the talker. In his opinion, Cobb would be a .200 hitter, just barely a .200 hitter, if he swung from the other side of the plate, for many of his little hits would be turned into outs under those circumstances. Tris Speaker, who has been on Cobb's heels nearly every year, is another left handed hitter of the same type who was named.

Stone Another Example.

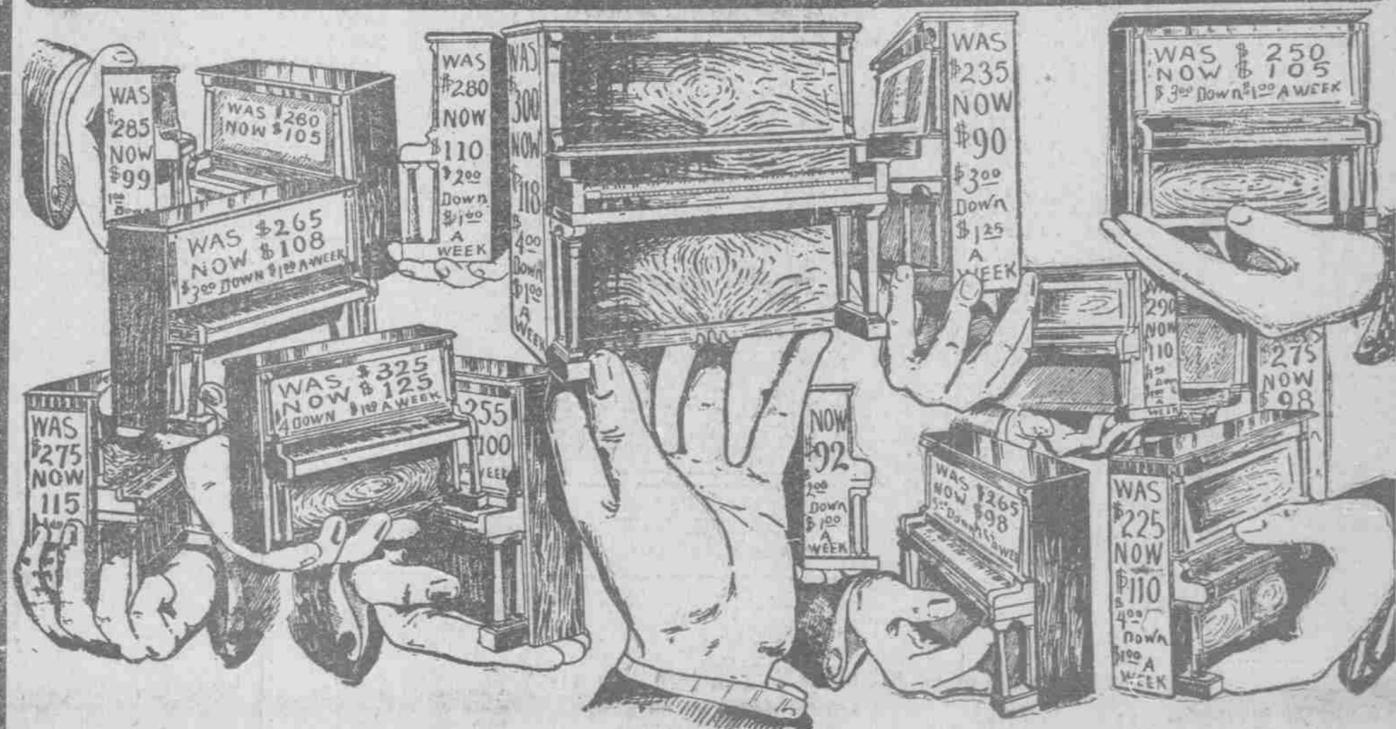
George Stone, who led the American league for one year, in 1907, just before Cobb bobbed for the first base, is still another. Many credit him with having been even speedier going to first base than is Tyris the Terrible. Stone is an apt illustration of the point made by the right hander about the southpaw batters pivoting on the ball of the right foot just at the finish of their swing and just as they gain momentum toward their destination. It will be recalled by this one year star of the St. Louis Browns that he ruined his baseball career by twisting his ankle one day when he pivoted as mentioned while wearing a pair of new sharp spikes which caught in the earth.

The case is presented. Jury, get together on your verdict. Odds 29 to 1 that you disagree.

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Looks Like a Tough Year For Sport Astrological Forecast Is Prepared

By DAMON RUNYON.

NEW YORK, Jan. 6.—The planets indicate to me that during the year 1915 there will be a lot of doing in the sporting world in the way of championships in the various sports already on the regular schedule.

There will be wars and rumors of wars in a lot of rings. Scandal will be rampant. Excitement will prevail, including the reappearance of George Crook out, the name of the new manager, and maybe the names of the owners of the Yanks, becoming public property. Great fires will occur, notably Charles Comiskey's fire of Clarence, the Parisian, and there will be a heavy earthquake in the vicinity of Boston on the day Sherwood Magee forgets how many are out.

Jupiter tells me that during the early months of the year Joseph Humphrey's voice may change to a deep bass if Joe doesn't avoid drafts. Tom Jones will be around explaining that Jess was really winning when the humane Mexican authorities stopped the fight. A lot of people will be anxious to death expressing their opinion of the books on Curley Brown's Cuban race. George Stallings will continue talking about the sports of Havana and the Wheeler syndicate will announce a new series of weekly articles by Hans Wagner, or somebody.

Wesley Will Win. I dislike appearing in the role of an alchemist, but it is in the stars that Freddy Welsh will win a no decision victory for the lightweight championship of the world, somewhere between the Atlantic ocean and the Missouri river, and the following item will appear in the newspapers:

Marlin, Texas, March 13.—It rained today and there was no practice, most of McGraw's players going out to visit Old Moss, the hermit. Christy Mathewson is experimenting with a new curve, the Marquises in rounding into such condition that it is feared he may be able to take his regular turn in the box this season.

Look at Saturn. The planet Saturn indicates that things will go along that way awhile, and then get worse. Hank O'Day will return to umpire Harry M. Stevens will put his trick ham sandwiches in training. Harvard will defeat Yale at New London as the judges have pronounced Harvard they will be looking this time. Columbia or Cornell will win at Poughkeepsie. I predict that the hotels at both places will be about the same as ever. Arthur Fromme will commence warming up in right field. Christy Mathewson will explain in his editorials that the yankees got away by a bad start on account of the good weather, and are bound to improve.

All About Mars. A perusal of Mars convinces me that before June 1 the Cincinnati baseball writers will have forgotten the turkey Charley Herzog sent them Christ-

mas. There will be rumors that the Yanks are to be strengthened. The Chicago papers will explain the position of the White Sox in due to the strife between Eddie Collins and Buck Weaver, and no hitting. Christy Mathewson will state in his editorials that the Giants have not yet struck their stride because of bad weather.

Rickey Will Arrive.

By the fourth of July I predict there will be rumors of the big shakeup in the Giants. Branch Rickey will arrive in the city with the St. Louis Browns to play the Yanks for the position in the standing just above the Cleveland club. The shakeup in the Giants will occur. Snodgrass will go to center in place of E. Bescher, and Murray will relieve Dave Roberts, son in right. Reports in the New York papers of the Breakfed ames will have shrunk to the word lands, and the box score. There will be further talk of strengthening the Yanks. George Stallings will state in his articles that a manager's most difficult task is to keep a championship club from becoming overconfident. John J. McGraw, John Evers and Heinie Zimmerman will be suspended for trouble with umpire Klem, Byron, Quigley, O'Day and others.

Critical for Griff.

My consultation of the planet Venus discloses that a pest of golf and lawn tennis players will descend upon the land during midsummer. Along in August the Yanks will be strengthened. King Cole will not be allowed to do any more pitching for them. Roger Bresnahan and Heinie Zimmerman will box their ninth consecutive draw. It will be very hot in Cincinnati. Sam Crane will be intensely disgusted with the Giants. The St. Louis fans will be resigned to their fate in all three leagues. This will be an evil month for Clarke Griffith, as he will discover that he cannot win the pennant. He should be very careful about what he eats at this critical period, and wear a cabbage leaf in his cap to keep his head cool.

Arthur Still In There.

By the first of September Christy Mathewson's editorial will have to be entirely rebuilt. Arthur Fromme will continue warming up in right field. Arlieben by Walter Camp will commence making their appearance in the papers, indicating the approach of fall. "Hurry-up" Yost will be filled with gloomy forebodings about Michigan's football team. The Brooklyn fans will have ceased writing letters. Rumors will connect the name of Jake Daubert with the management. Daubert will have a fine battling average and symptoms of a bad ankle. People will be wondering how Connie Mack digs up all those fine young players. The Boston baseball writers will be pointing out that if the Red Sox had played the same kind of baseball earlier in the season that they are playing now, they might have won the pennant.

Jake Will Lead.

By the middle of September Jake Daubert will be leading the National league batsmen, and his bum ankle will have healed on the bench. Sam Crane will be more disgusted than ever with the Giants. There will be talk of strengthening the Yanks for next season. I predict that the Philadelphia Nationals will still be in the league. The season will come to a close with Ping Bodie holding a strong lead in point of paragraptical mention. Fred Merkle, the White Hopes, Walter Johnson, the Federal League and Bill Klem, but with the six day riders yet to hear from.

It looks to me like a tough year.

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